

Warden Message: Overseas Absentee Voting

Act now to register to vote and request an absentee ballot for the 2008 presidential and general elections!

Eligibility to Vote

Generally, all U.S. citizens 18 years or older who are residing outside the United States during an election period are eligible to vote absentee in any election for Federal office. Some states allow overseas voters to vote in state and local elections as well.

Voting eligibility and residency requirements are determined by the various U.S. states, and are available on-line at <http://fvap.gov/pubs/vag.html>. Your "legal state of residence" for voting purposes is the state where you last resided immediately prior to departure from the United States. Voting rights extend to overseas citizens even though they may no longer own property or have other ties to their last state of residence, and even if their intent to return to that state may be uncertain. For those who have never resided in the United States, [sixteen states](#) allow certain U.S. citizens to register where a parent or spouse would be eligible to vote.

Voter Registration & Requesting an Absentee Ballot

Voters who have not yet registered to vote and requested an absentee ballot should do so now.

1. Complete the Federal Post Card Application ([FPCA](#)) using the instructions for your state in the [Voting Assistance Guide](#). You may pick up a hard copy of the FPCA from any U.S. Embassy or Consulate, or use the [online version](#).
2. Sign, date and mail the completed FPCA to the address listed in the [Voting Assistance Guide](#). If you are sending the FPCA through international mail, please affix appropriate airmail postage. Alternatively, you can print out a [postage-paid address label](#) and ask any U.S. Embassy or Consulate to send your FPCA postage-paid through diplomatic pouch or the military postal service. Some states allow voters to send in the FPCA by fax, but they also require you to send in the hard copy by mail. Follow your state's regulations precisely.
3. Send in a new FPCA if you have moved or changed your name since the last time you voted.
4. Check your state's voter registration verification website (<http://fvap.gov/vao/stregissites.html>), or follow up directly with your local election officials, to confirm that you are registered.

Voting

Your local voting officials should mail your absentee ballot 30 to 45 days before the November 4 general election. Return your voted ballot as early as possible. Be aware of your state's ballot receipt deadline, as well as any postmarking requirements.

Emergency Ballots

The Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot ([FWAB](#)) serves as an emergency ballot for voters who registered in time but fail to receive an official ballot from local election officials. Please note: You must register to vote and request an absentee ballot by your state's deadline - usually 30 days before the election - to be eligible to use the FWAB. We strongly recommend that voters who have not received their ballot by October 15 complete and return the FWAB to ensure your vote is received in time to be counted.

Questions?

The official U.S. government website for overseas voters is the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) website at www.fvap.gov.

The **Voting Assistance Officer** at the American Embassy in Quito is also always available to answer questions about absentee voting. To contact the Voting Assistance Officer, call 2562890 Ext. 4561 or send an e-mail to VoteQuito@state.gov.